

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1-45. (Canceled)

46. (New) A laser comprising:

first and second electrodes,

first and second sectional sidewalls provided at least partially between the first and second electrodes,

a laser waveguide including a cavity defined between the first and second electrodes and between the first and second sidewalls,

at least one protrusion on the first and/or second electrode, the protrusion extending into the cavity of the laser waveguide from the first and/or second electrode.

47. (New) The laser of claim 46, wherein protrusions are formed on each of the first and second electrodes.

48. (New) The laser of claim 46, wherein respective adjacent sections of the first sectional sidewall abut one another so as to be in contact with each other.

49. (New) The laser of claim 48, wherein respective adjacent sections of the second sectional sidewall abut one another so as to be in contact with each other.

50. (New) The laser of claim 46, wherein respective adjacent sections of the first sectional sidewall are spaced apart from one another.

51. (New) The laser of claim 46, where the at least one protrusion aids in starting characteristics of the laser by increasing the electric field in localized region(s) of the cavity.

52. (New) The laser of claim 46, wherein the waveguide laser is a CO₂ laser that uses a gaseous lasing material comprising CO₂.

53. (New) The laser of claim 46, wherein the sidewalls comprise ceramic.

54. (New) The laser of claim 53, wherein the sidewalls comprise one of BeO, Al₂O₃ and/or AlN.

55. (New) The laser of claim 46, wherein respective sections of the sidewalls are less than 200 mm in length.

56. (New) The laser of claim 46, wherein an electromagnetic field is caused by an oscillating current supplied to at least one of the electrodes such that the electromagnetic field is provided in the cavity of the waveguide.